COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Colchester, CT

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, September 12, 2023
6:00 PM
The Commons (Black Box Theater)
William J. Johnston Middle School
360 Norwich Avenue, Colchester

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice Chair Mary Tomasi, Secretary Margo Gignac, Michelle Millington, Christopher Rivers, Donna Antonacci

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Charles E. Hewes

OTHERS PRESENT: Business Director Rachel Linkkila, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk Heather Petit, Student Board Member Brooke Dean

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 Call to Order
Chair Alexander Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

1.2 Roll Call
Chair Alexander Oliphant conducted a roll call of the Board.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

2. STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORT

2.1 Student Board Member Report
Brooke Dean gave a report on school happenings and activities. Ms. Dean said that they raised funds to put on the Bacon Academy Annual First Day. Ms. Dean said fall sports are also in full swing including cross country, football and soccer. Ms. Dean reported that at WJJMS students had a Meet and Greet prior to their first day to allow them to feel more comfortable in the building; tomorrow night at JJIS tomorrow is an instrumental band night from 6:30-7:30 PM; and at CES there will be an Open House coming up for Prek-2nd.

3. *ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

3.1 New Agenda Items

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None.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

4.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

Kerrey Tarlton, 107 Berry Lane

Ms. Tarlton read a written statement on behalf of herself, Patrick Clark and Jennifer Harrison whose students attend Grasso Tech. In the statement, the families requested to have a hearing in regard to transportation for their students to/from Grasso Tech. Ms. Tarlton spoke to her experience with transportation this school year. Ms. Tarlton said that withdrawal of transportation has caused families unnecessary hardship. Ms. Tarlton submitted a hard copy of the written statement to the Board Chair.

Patrick Clark, 60 Deer Run Drive

Mr. Clark read written statements from three students, Caleib Clark, Amber Harrison and Banastre Tarlton in regard to their transportation to Grasso Tech. Hard copies of the statements were provided to the Board Chair.

Jennifer Harrison, 47 Novelli Place

Ms. Harrison read a letter from Jonathan Grossman, Dean of Students at Grasso Tech. After reading the letter, Ms. Harrison said there is a great impact on the parents and their children. Ms. Harrison stated that the Board of Education minutes of April 28, 2023, spoke about the proposal to cut Grasso Tech transportation but the impact to students was not mentioned. A hard copy of Mr. Grossman's letter was submitted to the Board Chair.

5. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

5.1 Update on the Beginning of the School Year

Superintendent Sullivan stated that the heat last week caused an impact on Bacon Academy school days. Mr. Sullivan stated that several air conditioning units were out at Bacon and despite the Director of Educational Operations' best efforts with fans and other measures, the school became too oppressive to have a full day of school.

Mr. Sullivan said that he will be having a Pride and Purpose Meeting on September 19, 2023 to discuss the strengths and areas of growth for the District. Superintendent Sullivan said he hoped community members would be able to attend. Invitations were sent to all families and staff through email and/or ParentSquare.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the District had a wonderful Convocation event at the beginning of the school year. Superintendent Sullivan stated they recognized the teacher of the year, paraprofessional of the year, and staff longevity. Mr. Sullivan said that it was a nice start to the school year.

6. *CONSENT AGENDA

6.1 *Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2023
6.2 *Board of Education Retreat Minutes of August 22, 2023
6.3 *Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2023
6.4 *BA Material Removal Request - Metal Lockers, Preschool Cubbies and Cafeteria Tables

Motion by: M.Gignac

To approve the consent agenda as presented.

Second: M.Tomasi

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Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

7. POLICIES – FIRST READ

7.1 1180 Memorials to Deceased Students and Staff

Donna Antonacci said this proposed policy predates the Board but was edited by the Committee. Ms. Antonacci said the policy will not allow for any permanent memorials; however, the administration can approve temporary memorials.

Discussion was had in regard to past memorials already at some schools. The consensus of the Board was that these memorials would stay as they were already in place.

Discussion was had in regard to schools or the district establishing permanent memorials. Mr. Sullivan suggested that the last sentence read "No permanent memorials will be permitted for/by an individual or group of individuals" which would still allow the school or a special committee associated at the school to have a plaque in place, etc.

8. *POLICIES - SECOND READ

8.1 *3540 Surveillance on School Property

Ms. Antonacci stated that policy 3540 would consolidate 4118.4 and 5131.11 into a policy that encompasses both students and staff.

8.2 *4118.4 Student Surveillance on School Property

Motion by: M.Gignac
To approve the removal of 4118.4 and approve policy 3540
Second: D.Antonacci
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.3 *5131.11 Personnel/Student Surveillance on School Property

Motion by: D. Antonacci
Second: M. Gignac
To remove 5131.11
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.4 *9000 Role of Board and Members

Motion by: D. Antonacci
To approve 9000 with the edit to strike the word "develop" in line K.
Second: C. RIvers
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.5 *9010 Limits of Authority

8.6 *9012 Legal Responsibilities of the Board of Education

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8.7 *9020 Public Statements

Motion by: M. Tomasi
To remove policies 9010, 9012 and 9020
Second: M.Gignac
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.8 *9222 Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure

Motion by: D.Antonacci
To approve policy 9222
Second: C. Rivers
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.9 *9250 Remuneration

Motion by: D.Antonacci
To table 9250 until the next Policy Committee meeting
Second: M. Tomasi
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.10 *9270 Conflict of Interest

Motion by: D.Antonacci
To approve 9270
Second: C.Rivers
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.11 *9271 Code of Ethics

8.12 *9272 Code of Conduct

Motion by: D.Antonacci
To remove policy 9271 and replace with policy 9272
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Ms. Antonacci stated that policies 3540 Surveillance on School Property and 1180 Memorials to Deceased Students and Staff have been submitted to the Board attorney for review. Ms. Antonacci said that if the attorney recommends changes the Board may have to revisit them.

9. REPORTS FROM BOARD LIAISONS / COMMITTEES

9.1 Reports from Board Liaisons

- Board of Selectmen: Donna Antonacci

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Ms. Antonacci said she is currently reviewing the last Board of Selectmen meeting video.

- Board of Finance: Christopher Rivers

Mr. Rivers stated that the Board of Finance Chair reached out in regard to a meeting about the upcoming budget process. Mr. Rivers stated that if anyone on the Board had any ideas on the process to please reach out.

- P&R Commission: Margo Gignac

Ms. Gignac stated that the Field of Dreams project is underway. Ms. Gignac said that R1 and R2 are currently getting irrigation systems put in followed by R3 and R4. Ms. Gignac stated that the Parks and Rec Department will be looking for a new machine to assist in care of the fields.

- PTO Collaborative: Margo Gignac

Ms. Gignac stated that a meeting has not been held yet as the PTOs are just kicking off as it's the beginning of the school year.

- C3 Collaborative: Rosemary Gignac

Ms. Gignac stated that the C3 Collaborative Kickoff meeting will be on September 18, 2023 from 6:30 - 8:00 PM in Room 1123 at Bacon Academy.

- Commission on Aging: Mary Tomasi

None.

- Youth & Social Services: Michelle Millington

None.

9.2 Reports from Board Committees

- Budget Finance Committee

Mr. Rivers stated that this is one of very few months that the Committee does not review transfers or budget reports because they want to look at July and August together to give an entire snapshot.

- Policy Committee

  No further information to report.

- Curriculum Committee

  None.

- Facilities Committee

Mr. Rivers stated that the Committee is very well aware of the air conditioning situation and the administration has been finding solutions and looking at potential funding sources to get the situation resolved.

Mr. Sullivan reiterated that the meeting on September 19, 2023 at 4:30 pm will give community members opportunities to be involved in facilities and other areas.

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10. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION ITEMS

10.1 Next Meetings

- BOE Regular Meeting: Tuesday, September 26, 2023
- Budget Finance Committee: Wednesday, October 4, 2023
- Curriculum Committee Meeting: Monday, October 16, 2023

10.2 Enrollment Report

Mr. Sullivan stated that the October 1 enrollment report is what all districts use for reporting to the state. Mr. Sullivan stated that a comparison report next month will be provided and then again during the budget process.

10.3 Personnel Report

Informational only. See attachment in Board packet. Mr. Sullivan is hoping to fill a special education position as filling special education positions is a challenge across the state.

10.4 Notices of Retirement/Resignation

- Dr. Charles E. Hewes
- Brianna Laskey
- Shelly Landry
- Amanda Tallman
- Patrick Donnelly

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

11.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

Jennifer Cox, 7 Ivy Court

Ms. Cox recommended that the Board consider having a special education advisory committee. Ms. Cox stated that the committee working along with administration could help improve special education services in Colchester as well as community perception.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Oliphant adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Heather R. Petit
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk

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